

**Evergreen Fire District
Board of Trustees
Meeting**

**Meeting Minutes
Regular Board Meeting of February 6th, 2023 – 6:00 pm**

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Chairman Fallon brings the meeting to order @ 6:23 pm

Fallon acknowledges Pastor Craig of Calvary Lutheran for the meeting meal.

TRUSTEES IN ATTENDANCE:

Fallon, Fontaine, Connolly
(1 vacancy)

ABSENT:

Gipe

PERSONNEL IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Williams, Admin Cheri

RECOGNIZE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:

(none)

PUBLIC COMMENT: *At this time, public may comment on any public matter that is not on the Agenda of the Meeting and that is within the jurisdiction of the District.*

FINANCIALS:

Discuss and approve December 2022 Financials – Action

Motion; Connolly to approve the checks written and accept the December 2022 financials as presented; second by Fontaine; passes.

Fallon states \$200,000 was approved to be transferred from 7204 to 7250 and should wait until June to do so. He states \$25,000 was approved to be transferred from 7207 to 7250 and that should be done in the near future. Fallon states it shouldn't require a budget amendment. Fallon asks if the District should ever be concerned about auditing the 9518 (HRA) account. Chief Williams states the auditor had a concern that it was not being reported on. Admin assistant reports that currently there have been 2 transfers to date into 9518 as part of the \$104,640 approved transfer; one for \$43,600 (July to Nov 2022) and another for \$26,160 (Dec 2022 to Feb 2023) with future transfers to 9518 of \$8720 per month for the remainder of the fiscal year. (on-shift personnel Barnhart and Baker join the meeting). Fallon asks if the District needs to be concerned about what NueSynergy is doing with the interest earnings.

PAST ITEMS/UPDATES:

1. Approve meeting minutes of January 4th 2023 – Action

Motion; Fontaine to accept the meeting minutes of January 4th as presented; second by Connolly; passes.

2. Benevolent Fund Cap Discussion/Policy (carry over by Chief Williams)-Action

Motion; Connolly to approve the revised resolution 2023-01 which caps the Benevolent Fund at \$15,000 and donations exceeding the cap will be deposited into 4212; second by Fontaine; passes

3. Inter Cap Loan Update (cont'd)

Fallon states a \$500,000 loan was approved and nothing more needs to be done in regard to the InterCap loan. The District has a year to use the loan which has 5 year terms. Chief Williams

states that the time frame to receive the new apparatus went from 1 to 18 months out to now 3 years. This issue is due to steel not being readily available to be able to build the chassis. Chief Williams will now be looking at demo apparatus which are practically new with low miles and warranties. Fallon asks about ambulance updates; Chief Williams states he is hearing August as the ready date with no payments due until vehicle is received. They have not required any money down but still 'playing the production game'. Fallon states the approximate cost is \$190,000 and Chief Williams states the price won't go up but it will not come with a power cot which will have to be purchased separately. Fallon states \$100,000 is available: \$50,000 from the current fiscal year and \$50,000 from the next fiscal year to be applied and leaves \$400,000 for the engine and \$100,000 from this fiscal year and \$100,000 starting July 1 making \$600,000 available. Fallon states \$50,000 of that is needed for accessories with the balance being used for interest payments. Chief Williams states the ambulance won't be a custom build and will include no 'bells and whistles'.

4. MSF Dividend Account Update – Fallon to talk with Amy at County – Action

Fallon states he emailed Amy at the County and did not hear back and has not followed up.

(This items is continued)

5. Health Benefits Discussion Update (cont'd)

a) District paid an additional \$2825 to have 5 personnel added to insurance for 1 month (Action-ratification)

Connolly states the plan representative for the District did not get the new plan information to the District in a timely manner and advised the admin assistant to formally cancel the District's coverage with Trustmark before coverage was commence with the new carrier. After cancellation, the District was informed that a minimum of participants was needed which required 5 additional personnel to accept insurance for a period of 1 month which would be paid by the District in addition to receiving their HRA contribution for the same month. Those 5 personnel would come off of the insurance plan after the 1 month and would not count against the census. In addition, the plan would be back dated to January 1, 2023. Connolly states he authorized these actions which now need ratification by the rest of the Board. Chief Williams states that in regard to HRA, the Board has several options; continue as is but not knowing how to better the health insurance benefit; discontinue the roll-over; discontinue the pay outs; discontinue HRA for those with other insurance; or discontinue the HRA entirely. He states there are 2 personnel receiving HRA who are utilizing it for how the Board had intended it to be used. Chief Williams tells the Board that the District is currently once again at the bottom end of being comparative and competitive with other Districts in what they have to offer in regard to health benefits which is going to hinder recruitment and retention even though the hourly rate is still competitive. Fontaine asks if he is speaking about health benefits exclusively and Chief Williams says he is speaking to both health benefits and retirement.

Motion; Fontaine to approve PacificSource health insurance coverage back dated to Jan 1 2023 including the one-time total of \$2825 contributed to the HRA plan participants for 5 individuals (\$565 each) for the month of January; second by Fallon; passes.

6. Cheri's Raise - Action

Chief Williams states Admin. Assistant Cheri was given a 6 month time line to be trained to do bookkeeping with an increase in her wage at the end of those 6 months. Fallon states since the Board will not be meeting for another month or 5 weeks and if Carol, Chief Williams and Ashley come up with a rate of pay to send out an email and the trustees will ratify it at the next meeting. *(to be continued at the next meeting).*

NEW ITEMS:

1. Removal of Brockman as a signatory – Action

Motion; Fontaine, to remove Anthony "Tony" Brockman as signer on any and all Evergreen Fire District checking accounts, saving accounts and legal documents effective Jan 1, 2023 with

the only legal signatories on the same being the 5 following individuals; John T (Jack) Fallon, Marc Connolly, Carol Fontaine, Bruce Gipe and Craig Williams; second by Connolly; passes

Motion; Connolly, to approve 2 authorized signatories on Glacier Bank Account 4212 as follows; Craig Williams and Benjamin Covington; second by Fontaine; passes

2. Transfer of funds to Department Fund 4212 Discussion – Action

Chief Williams states \$5000 was moved to 4212 from 7204 to ensure there was enough funds to cover the annual Christmas Party expenditures. The last transfer prior was for \$14,000 in 2020; \$30,000 went to Health and Wellness; \$14,000 for wildland purchases; all contingent upon receiving the \$58,000 in wildland revenue in 2021. Chief Williams states it's historically been how 4212 is funded by receiving a percentage of wildland revenue. The District had revenue of \$31,216 from wild fires in 2022. Chief Williams recommends an additional \$5000 be allocated to 4212 from wildland revenue. He states he will be sending personnel to wildland fire training and the District historically pays for that training (\$7042 set aside in the budget) as well has having adopted the DNRC's state rate of pay. Chief Williams states he will have a better idea of what the balance going into 7250 should be by the next meeting. *(to be continued)*

3. Change date of March meeting from the 6th to the 13th - Administrative Action

(Gipe cannot attend unless the meeting is moved to the 13th. Trustees agree to meet on the 13th of March.)

CHIEF'S REPORT:

1. December 2022 Call Volume

a) 2019/2022 Comparison Incident Count by Weekday/Hour (all zones) for December

b) 2019/2022 Comparison Incident Statistics for December


Chief Williams provided trustees with graphs based on EMS calls only and Fire calls only. He states there was a total of 1,049 IFT's for 2022; 605 were contract transports (guaranteed payment); 386 non-contract transports; 58 long distance transports with 7 being to the State hospital; total call volume is 2988 for 2022. Compared to 2019 with 3099 total call volume showing a 3.7% overall decrease from 2019. Chief Williams states he is working on additional information such as fuel costs, overall maintenance and etc., and states that currently, for every dollar spent on the IFT program, the District is profiting \$1.94. He states Evergreen area alone is up 18% in total call volume over 2019. The decline is occurring due to IFT's which show a 27% decrease over 2019 and a 34% decrease in the amount of times going into the City of Kalispell but is being offset by a 40% increase in responding to Creston as well as the increase in volume within our own District. There were 1,406 IFT's in 2019 vs. 1,067 in 2022 which is due to Logan's ambulance program. Chief Williams does not have the data for West Valley calls yet but will have both data and revenue for the next meeting. Fontaine states there is value in tracking the actual dollars and would like to see a semi-annual spreadsheet. Chief Williams states all of the information he is showing is found in the Pintler monthly reports. Fallon states he is mostly interested in the monthly invoice charges report showing what's been paid, written off, and the balance owed. Yearly averages can be calculated to show what the District's collections are; monthly billing average. He states it would be nice to know what the collection averages are by districts.

Chief Williams refers to information he sent regarding a legislative update which includes a bill that is expected to pass and will have significant implications for the District in the future. He states it is the City's legislation and is sponsored by Keith Regier and is called the 'Fire Authority Bill' which allows a combination of unincorporated Districts to join forces with a Class I city. If the District chooses to not participate, they will reach out to others like S. Kalispell or Smith Valley. He states implementing a Fire Authority would require each District to give up their

Boards and become one Fire Authority Board over all of the participating agencies. Each respective agency would have 1 representative of that board that would participate on the 5 member Board. It would also entail all 19 departments to become 1 department and combine all of their monies, equipment, and personnel under 1 umbrella. Chief Williams states he sees both pros and cons with one of the positives being that there would be one County tax for a Fire Authority and would open one large pool of money, extend service areas, improve employee benefits, allow universal training, along with a lot of resources. He states the obvious disadvantage being the Evergreen Fire District would no longer exist; there would be only 1 Fire Chief with an Assistant Chief and each respective department Fire Chief becoming a Battalion Chief.

Adjourn @ 8:30 pm

The President of the Board of Trustees, as presiding officer of any meeting of the Board of Trustees, may close the meeting during the time the discussion relates to a matter of individual privacy; and, then, if, and only if, the presiding officer determines that the demands of individual privacy clearly exceed the merits of public disclosure. The right of individual privacy may be waived by the individual about whom the discussion pertains; and, in that event, the meeting must be open.



Board Chairman Fallon



Board Vice Chairman Connolly